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Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Peacekeeping operations*

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/218 B (para. 5 (e)), 54/244 (paras. 4 and 5), and 59/272 (paras. 1-3). It covers oversight activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services related to peace operations during the 12-month period from 1 January to 31 December 2009.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services issued 214 oversight reports related to peace operations. The recommendations issued represent 46 per cent of all recommendations put forward during the period. The assignments that were conducted underscore the need for the Organization to develop a formal internal control framework to ensure that risks are managed consistently and systematically through focused control processes throughout the Organization.

* For the report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services other than peacekeeping oversight activities, see A/64/326 (Part I) and Add.1 and 2).

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Preface

I am pleased to submit to the General Assembly a report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) covering the Office's findings in peace operations for the 12-month period ending 31 December 2009.

During the reporting period, OIOS expanded its field audit presence to the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia, launched its investigation learning programme and continued to strengthen its evaluation methods with a focus on the broader political, institutional and socio-economic impact of United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Office also continued to refine its risk-assessment methodology. In this regard, OIOS has observed that the conduct of its risk assessments has had a positive impact on managers' awareness of internal controls, as demonstrated by the increase in requests for OIOS guidance in this area. While OIOS remains committed to supporting and advising management, we continue to emphasize that implementing and maintaining internal controls, including risk management, is a core management responsibility.

The present report highlights deficiencies in internal controls in a range of areas, from contract management to air operations, that expose the Organization to unnecessary risk. Lack of compliance with standard operating procedures, poor planning and inadequate management are just a few of the types of deficiencies identified. Pursuant to paragraph 1 (c) of General Assembly resolution 59/272, copies of OIOS reports are made available to Member States upon request.

While I continue to underscore the need for the adoption of and adherence to a formal internal control framework, it must be made clear that this will not be a panacea for all operational weaknesses in the Organization. As can be noted from the present report, some of the adverse findings of OIOS are in areas where controls, such as policies and procedures, do exist but have been breached due, inter alia, to lack of staff familiarity with policies rules and procedures, improper training, or simply poor management oversight. High vacancy and turnover rates in the field also exacerbate operational challenges in mission environments. Nevertheless, management must assume ownership of its responsibility for effective controls. In 2006, the Secretary-General initiated compacts with his senior managers as one mechanism to promote accountability for results. The compacts set out specific results and management targets. In my view, it is now time to expand these compacts to include a section where managers pronounce themselves as to the effectiveness and adequacy of internal controls for resources under their supervision. In my opinion, such a declaration from management would provide an impetus to bringing about the necessary process for strengthening internal controls and accountability in the Organization.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services remains fully engaged in assisting the Secretary-General in fulfilling his oversight responsibilities in respect of the resources and staff of the Organization. The Office wishes to thank the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and mission staff for the support they lend to the Office in the conduct of its duties.

(*Signed*) Inga-Britt **Ahlenius**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

I. Introduction

1. During the reporting period, from 1 January to 31 December 2009, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) issued 214 oversight reports related to peace operations. The recommendations issued in those reports represent 46 per cent of all OIOS recommendations issued during the reporting period. The present report provides an overview of the work of OIOS in these areas.

2. The present part (part II) of the report of OIOS pertains exclusively to oversight of United Nations peace operations, which includes the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the peacekeeping missions that fall under those Departments and the special political and peacebuilding missions led by the Department of Political Affairs or the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, supported by the Department of Field Support.

II. Overview

A. Internal audit

3. The Peacekeeping Audit Service of the Internal Audit Division operates out of New York and via resident audit offices based in 11 missions and 1 office (see figure I), including the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL),[1] and the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA).

4. In New York, the Peacekeeping Audit Service covers audits of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and smaller peacekeeping and special political missions where there are no resident auditors. The Peacekeeping Audit Service is assisted by specialists from the Special Assignment Section[2] and the Information and Communication Technology Audit Section.[3] The specific expertise of these staff members complements the work of the resident auditors and ensures consistency and depth in auditing cross-cutting areas in information and communications technology.

[1] In addition to UNIFIL, the resident audit office covers the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.

[2] The Special Assignments Section was created in 2009 to strengthen the Division's capacity to identify risks of fraud and to conduct audits of a sensitive and complex nature, especially those posing a high reputational risk to the Organization.

[3] The Information and Communication Technology Audit Section was created in 2007 to develop the Division's information and communications technology audit strategy, to enhance the quality and productivity of information and communications technology audits, and to assist resident auditors in identifying information and communications technology risks faced by peacekeeping missions.

Figure I
Offices of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

5. In 2009, the Peacekeeping Audit Service issued 92 reports to programme managers, two of which were submitted to the General Assembly. The breakdown of the reports by focus area is provided in the table below.

Table
Number of reports issued from January to December 2009, by focus area

Focus area	*Number of reports*
Financial management	10
Human resources management	13
Information technology management	5
Logistics management	10
Procurement and contract management	15
Programme and project management	12
Property and facilities management	6
Safety and security	7
Other areas	10
Strategic management and governance	3
Conference and documents management	1
Total	**92**

6. Peacekeeping audit reports issued in 2009 contained 909 recommendations, including 328 recommendations aimed at strengthening internal controls to mitigate identified high risks. Of all recommendations issued, 98 per cent were accepted, and as at 31 December 2009, 40 per cent of the recommendations addressing high risks had been implemented.

Risk-based work planning

7. The annual audit workplan of OIOS is based on an assessment of risks facing the Organization, in accordance with Practice Advisory 2010-2 of the Institute of Internal Auditors.[4] The assessments ensure that OIOS resources are efficiently deployed to assist the Organization in its responsibility to mitigate and manage risks. During the reporting period, risk registers were updated for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and peacekeeping missions.

8. In its resolution 63/287, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to entrust to OIOS the task of refining the methodology for allocating resident auditors, taking into account the risks and complexity of the operation of individual peacekeeping operations, and to report thereon to the Assembly. That request followed the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (A/63/703, para. 35), that OIOS should "use the risk-based workplan as the basis for the allocation of resources". Following that recommendation, the Internal Audit Division has used a risk-based audit planning process, in accordance with Practice Advisory 2010-2, to develop its workplan and budget for the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Improving the quality of work

9. OIOS continuously seeks to develop its processes and methods to improve the quality of audits. Accordingly, the Resident Audit Coordination Section was established to assist the Chief of the Peacekeeping Audit Service in overseeing the implementation of the annual workplan, which includes managing 25 to 30 concurrent audits. One core function of the Coordination Section is to ensure the coherent application of internal auditing standards and high and consistent quality of audit reports through the implementation of the quality assurance initiatives developed by the Professional Practices Section of the Internal Audit Division. The Coordination Section also conducts horizontal audits covering multiple missions, disseminates best practices, provides on-the-job training on audit tools and methodology, and assists resident auditors in conducting risk assessments in complex missions.

10. During the reporting period, resident auditor staff participated in training programmes aimed at enhancing skill sets for auditing substantive programmes, governance and strategic management. The Division also continues to provide a distance learning programme on audit report writing and is supporting its auditors to obtain professional certifications, such as Certified Internal Auditor and Certified Information Systems Auditor.

Supporting and advising management

11. In addition to providing audit coverage for peacekeeping and special political missions, the Internal Audit Division provided ad hoc advisory services to the Department of Field Support and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, upon request. For example, the Peacekeeping Audit Service assisted the Department of Field Support in developing a register of potential risks faced by UNSOA in order to

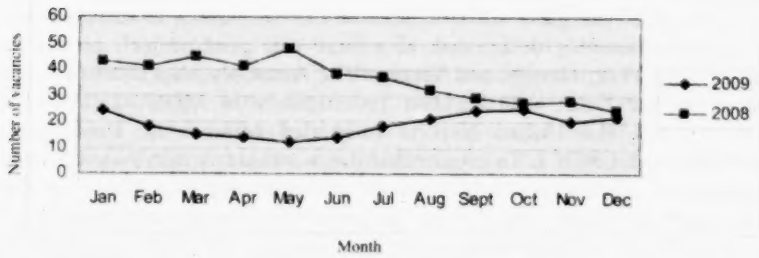
[4] Institute of Internal Auditors, "Using the risk management process in internal audit planning" (July 2009).

systematically monitor risk mitigating strategies. Moreover, the results of a horizontal audit of the effectiveness of the local committees on contracts in peacekeeping missions (AP2007/600/08) were presented at the annual meeting of the chairs of local committees on contracts in order to learn from audit results and improve the effectiveness of these committees. Looking forward to 2010, OIOS plans to assist management in assessing and strengthening internal controls through self-assessment workshops. The Department of Field Support has specifically requested OIOS to assist the Department in the assessment of internal controls to ensure that risks associated with its support strategy are adequately mitigated. The Department of Management has also requested the advice of OIOS on the oversight of its pilot project establishing the Regional Procurement Office in Entebbe, Uganda.

Staffing

12. Over the past two years, the Internal Audit Division has sought to decrease vacancy rates in resident auditor offices by conducting assessment exercises[5] to fill positions in the Professional, Field Services and General Service categories. The Division also continues to enhance the visibility of its recruitment strategy and has increased the use of Galaxy rosters for staff selection. Vacancy rates decreased from 36 per cent in 2008 to 19 per cent in 2009, and reached 10 per cent in May 2009. The Division will continue to pursue all avenues to ensure that vacancy rates remain at minimal levels.

Figure II
Comparative vacancy rates of the resident audit offices



Board of Auditors review of the activities of resident audit offices

13. As part of its annual audit of peacekeeping operations, the Board of Auditors regularly reviews the activities of the resident audit offices and makes recommendations to improve their work. In its most recent report, the main recommendations of the Board were to monitor the workplans of resident auditors more carefully and increase efficiency in reviewing reports to ensure that audits are finalized in a timely manner, and to expedite the filling of all resident auditor posts ensure effective internal audit coverage of all missions (see A/63/5 (Vol. II),

[5] Assessment exercises are conducted several times a year in group sessions. The assessments include written tests, group exercises and competency-based interviews in order to form a roster of suitable candidates for internal audit positions.

chap. 11). The Internal Audit Division has taken prompt action to implement the recommendations made by the Board, most of which will be implemented continuously in view of their ongoing nature.

Client feedback on the work of the Internal Audit Division

14. The Internal Audit Division seeks regular feedback from managers on their satisfaction with the audit services provided and on areas for improvement. Early in 2009, the Division sent out client satisfaction survey questionnaires to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and peacekeeping and special political missions which received audit services in 2008. On a four-point scale, with four being the highest, the average overall rating of audit services was 2.9. Generally, the responses indicated that the internal audit services provided had been valuable. Clients commented that the professionalism and innovativeness of auditors had helped in the identification of weaknesses in internal controls and development of realistic recommendations. Some clients commented that the audits were very useful in improving management processes and controls, while others recognized the benefits of interacting with auditors and receiving constructive, objective feedback and advice. OIOS took note of the constructive comments provided, including a comment to improve the timeliness of reports, and will continue to make concerted efforts to improve in the areas identified.

B. Investigations Division

15. In the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening investigations, OIOS presented its proposals for restructuring the Investigations Division in order to enhance the quality of work and timeliness of reporting, and to achieve, inter alia, economies of scale and synergies (see A/62/582 and Corr.1, annex). In its resolution 63/287, the General Assembly designated, as a three-year pilot project, centres of investigation in New York, Nairobi and Vienna. The Assembly also retained some OIOS presence in the field, with resident investigators in MONUC, UNMIL, UNMIS, MINUSTAH, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), UNIFIL and UNOCI. To ensure that the workload is distributed evenly among investigation centres and missions, the Case Intake Committee in the Investigations Division,[6] takes into account geographical coverage and capacity of resources at centres and missions when assigning cases. In 2009, 104 investigation reports related to peacekeeping operations were issued to programme managers.

[6] The Case Intake Committee was established in 2009 to determine whether information reported to or identified by the Investigations Division should be investigated. Consistent with the procedures of the Division, the evaluation criteria used by the Committee include the scope of the investigation, applicable legal norms, receivability, jurisdiction, specialized investigative skills and the need for further clarification. The Committee may designate a reported matter for: (a) assignment for investigation; (b) rejection and registration for information purposes; (c) referral to an appropriate entity to respond to the matter; or (d) suspension pending further clarification. More information regarding investigations intake may be found in the OIOS Investigations Manual, available on the OIOS website at www.un.org/Depts/oios.

Capacity-building

16. During the reporting period, the Investigations Division began implementation of its investigation learning programme, designed to raise awareness and technical know-how of United Nations personnel involved with investigations and to hone the skills of Investigations Division personnel. Two of the seven modules that have been developed were presented at Headquarters and in the field (module 4: Investigating sexual harassment, and module 5: Investigating sexual exploitation and abuse). The module on sexual harassment investigations was the first to be delivered, to participants from various peacekeeping missions and offices in New York, Geneva, Dili, Beirut and Naqoura, and the module on sexual exploitation and abuse has been presented in MONUC and UNMIL. The overall appreciation for these learning activities is reflected in the positive evaluations by the attendees and the demand for additional training sessions. A third module (module 3: Investigating procurement matters) has been completed and is ready for delivery. Other modules, covering topics such as information technology forensics and interviewing techniques, have been developed and tested with the Division's personnel. Full implementation of the learning programme is expected in 2010.

Cooperation with counterparts

17. The Investigations Division undertakes extensive cooperation at two primary levels. Firstly, all functions related to the new administration of justice demand careful consideration for their impact on OIOS activities. Accordingly, the Division meets regularly with the Department of Management and the Office of Administration of Justice to ensure sharing of information and proper development of standards in the system of internal justice. Similarly, the Division will collaborate closely with the United Nations Dispute Tribunal during the hearing of disciplinary cases in terms of providing evidence and testimony. The second area of cooperation covers peacekeeping operations and includes relations with troop-contributing countries. The Division has developed new procedures outlining interaction with military contingents pursuant to the model memorandum of understanding between troop-contributing countries and the United Nations (A/61/19/Rev.1, annex) in order to promote collaboration among mission management, the Department of Field Support and Member State representatives, in the interest of ensuring effective justice for all investigations of military contingent members.

C. Inspection and Evaluation Division

18. The Inspection and Evaluation Division continued its efforts to strengthen its framework for peacekeeping evaluations with a focus on the achievement of mission-specific peacekeeping mandates. The approach was further complemented by thematic evaluations, which examined well-defined functional, organizational or policy issues that cut across all or several peacekeeping missions.

19. During the reporting period, the Division continued to strengthen core evaluation methods. This included methodological tools, such as local population surveys, that allow for exploration of linkages between United Nations peacekeeping operations and the broader political, institutional and socio-economic changes that follow United Nations peacekeeping interventions. In 2009, local population surveys were conducted for programme evaluations at MINUSTAH and

UNMIL. Both evaluations have been completed and were initially scheduled for submission to the General Assembly at its second resumed sixty-fourth session. Following the recent crisis in Haiti, however, the submission of the evaluation of MINUSTAH will be postponed pending review of its relevance and utility under the changed circumstances of the Mission.

D. Impediments to the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

20. OIOS is extremely concerned that the D-2 vacancy in the Investigations Division remains unfilled. Meeting the challenging requirements of managing the Division requires full management capacity and strong and sufficient leadership. The long impasse on this issue has been duly noted by the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (see A/63/737), as well as by the General Assembly. In its resolution 63/287, the Assembly took note of the observations and recommendations contained in the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee on vacant posts in OIOS and requested the Secretary-General to fill the vacancies in the Office in accordance with the existing relevant provisions governing recruitment in the United Nations and the provisions of the resolution. The Assembly has retained its authority to approve the appointment of the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services (resolution 48/218 B) as a measure of protecting the operational independence of OIOS. Therefore, for consistency, the Under-Secretary-General should have the authority to appoint key staff in OIOS. It must also be emphasized that the delegation of authority by the Secretary-General contained in administrative instruction ST/AI/401 provides, inter alia, that the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services has the authority to appoint all staff members whose appointments are limited to service with the Office up to the D-2 level. To ensure that the Investigations Division has adequate leadership and management capacity, it is critical that this post be filled expeditiously.

III. Oversight findings by risk area

21. The present section summarizes selected findings from the period under review, classified into seven risk categories: strategy, governance, compliance, finance, operations, human resources and information. In the opinion of OIOS, these categories most accurately represent the various types of risk present in the work environment of the United Nations.[7] In light of the recent crisis in Haiti, the present report does not contain findings pertaining to MINUSTAH.

A. Strategy risk

22. OIOS defines strategy risk in the context of the United Nations as the impact on the mandate, operations or reputation of the Organization arising from:

(a) Inadequate strategic planning;

(b) Adverse business decisions;

(c) Improper implementation of decisions;

[7] Findings from the same oversight assignment may apply to several risk categories.

(d) Lack of responsiveness to changes in the external environment;

(e) Exposure to economic or other considerations that affect the Organization.

23. In an audit of the management of peacekeeping air operations (AP2008/600/03), OIOS found that the Department of Field Support did not have a formal integrated peacekeeping aviation strategy that consolidated the strategic initiatives contained in the United Nations aviation standards for humanitarian and peacekeeping air transport operations, the Aviation Manual and the strategic goals of the Department of Field Support. The failure to consolidate initiatives may result in a lack of uniform understanding of the aviation strategy, adversely affecting aviation support to peacekeeping operations. The Department of Field Support accepted the recommendations of OIOS and informed OIOS that a global support strategy for all functional areas in peacekeeping operations was being implemented.

24. In an audit of the provision of medical services in UNMIS (AP2008/632/11), OIOS found that six clinics belonging to troop-contributing countries and a United Nations hospital co-located in the same compound were not operationally integrated. Such an arrangement is contrary to provisions in the Medical Support Manual for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, which require the integration of United Nations medical infrastructure and systems to maximize utilization of medical resources in a cost-effective manner. OIOS estimated that by reorganizing and rationalizing the medical support services available in each compound, the United Nations could save $7 million per year. UNMIS accepted the recommendation of OIOS to optimize medical capacities.

25. The thematic evaluation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration[8] in peacekeeping operations (IED-09-003) found mixed results in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.[9] Despite some progress in consolidating policy tools and integrating cross-cutting areas, gaps remain in planning and design of these programmes. In particular, OIOS found that expertise related to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration was not incorporated early on in the peace process and that planning and execution lacked an integrated and coherent approach with key partners. These gaps limited the contributions of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes to the peace process. OIOS recommended that a formal mechanism be established to ensure that the process for planning and designing these programmes is based on an integrated and coherent approach involving the peacekeeping operation, the United Nations country team and other key partners. OIOS also recommended that planning take place concurrently and continuously between the different stages of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

26. In the same evaluation report, OIOS also noted that the separate systems and cycles of programme planning, resource management and accountability used by disarmament, demobilization and reintegration implementing partners posed

[8] Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is a process that contributes to security and stability in post-conflict recovery by removing weapons from the hands of combatants, taking the combatants out of military structures and helping them to integrate socially and economically into society by finding civilian livelihoods.

[9] Five missions were reviewed: the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

challenges to seamless transition from disarmament and demobilization to reintegration and reinsertion. Such a lack of coordination risks the loss of gains obtained in the earlier phases of the overall programme. OIOS recommended that peacekeeping missions undertake a review and mapping of the various disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operating cycles of implementing partners in order to anticipate and plan disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations more efficiently and effectively. OIOS also recommended that programme planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration be coordinated through a common overarching strategy linking disarmament, demobilization and reintegration with other mutually reinforcing mandate objectives such as security sector reform. All recommendations made in the thematic evaluation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration were accepted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

B. Governance risk

27. OIOS defines governance risk in the context of the United Nations as the impact on the mandate, operations or reputation of the Organization arising from:

(a) Failure to establish appropriate processes and structures to inform, direct, manage and monitor the activities of the Organization;

(b) Insufficient leadership within senior management;

(c) Absence of promotion of an ethical culture in the Organization.

28. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/279, OIOS conducted an audit of the Secretariat structure for managing and sustaining peacekeeping operations. As discussed in its report to the General Assembly (A/63/837), OIOS found that the Secretariat had not yet developed the necessary governance and accountability mechanisms to ensure effectiveness and accountability in peacekeeping operations under the new structure. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Management accepted the recommendations of OIOS to strengthen accountability mechanisms.

29. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/261, OIOS conducted an audit of the management of special political missions led by the Department of Political Affairs to determine whether the recommendations contained in the previous report of OIOS (A/61/357) had been fully implemented. As discussed in the related report to the General Assembly (A/64/294), while the Department of Political Affairs had made some progress in implementing the recommendations of OIOS, more needed to be done to ensure effective and efficient backstopping of special political missions. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Department of Political Affairs accepted the new recommendations of OIOS aimed at further strengthening accountability mechanisms and improving backstopping of special political missions.

30. In an audit of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA) (AP2009/644/01), OIOS found deficiencies in internal controls, placing the Mission's resources at risk for fraud, waste and mismanagement. Poor communication and lack of trust and professionalism within the Mission had an adverse impact on interpersonal relations and hindered the

effective accomplishment of the Mission's mandate. In particular, OIOS found that weak internal controls over financial operations resulted in erroneous payroll payments, unreconciled bank statements and long-outstanding receivables. Moreover, payments for procured services were made without contracts or purchase orders. The Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Field Support accepted the recommendations of OIOS and advised that the new Integrated Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) had taken measures to strengthen internal controls over financial management and procurement.

31. In an audit of the management of a multifunction logistics services contract (AP2008/634/03) in UNAMID, OIOS found that the contract was poorly managed owing to a lack of preparedness by both the Mission and the contractor. In particular, OIOS found that because of difficulties in attracting qualified candidates to work in the Mission area of operations, inadequate numbers of staff were deployed. The contractor also delayed the deployment of its personnel for the project. Moreover, OIOS noted delays in establishing a Senior Management Review Board and that the required standard operating procedures were not finalized as a result of inadequate staffing levels. OIOS noted the ongoing efforts of the Mission and the Department of Field Support to strengthen the contract management function.

32. In an audit of information and communications technology governance, strategic management and security in UNMIS (AT2008/632/01), OIOS noted the absence of a committee to review and oversee information and communications technology activities, required in accordance with ST/SGB/2003/17. The absence of this committee exposed the Mission to significant risks, including the risk that information and communications technology resources might fail to effectively support the objectives and strategy of the Mission. UNMIS accepted the recommendation of OIOS to establish a committee for reviewing information and communications technology activities.

C. Compliance risk

33. OIOS defines compliance risk in the context of the United Nations as the impact on the mandate, operations or reputation of the Organization arising from violations of, or the failure or inability to comply with, laws, rules, regulations, prescribed practices, policies, procedures or ethical standards.

34. In an audit of the management of peacekeeping air operations (AP2008/600/03), OIOS identified weaknesses in the procurement of air charter services. In particular, OIOS found that insufficient time had been allowed for effective bidding and improper vendor registration. OIOS also found that there were unclear provisions in air charter agreements concerning the application of liquidated damages for prolonged interruptions of services as well as for the calculation of liquidated damages for the late positioning of aircraft. Non-compliance with established procurement policies may result in losses to the Organization. The Department of Field Support and the Department of Management accepted the recommendations of OIOS aimed at improving the procurement of air charter services.

35. In an audit of the maintenance of airfields in MONUC (AP2008/620/10), OIOS found that the Mission did not comply with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards for the rehabilitation and routine maintenance of runways, taxiways and aprons. OIOS further noted a lack of in-house airfield structural planning experts and inadequate training of Mission staff in ICAO standards. Moreover, the Mission did not effectively use the technical services of ICAO, which were provided through an inter-agency services agreement. Non-compliance with ICAO standards increases uncertainty about the effectiveness of safety arrangements. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS calling for compliance with the relevant ICAO standards for the maintenance and rehabilitation of airfields. The Department of Field Support advised OIOS that the United Nations had concluded an umbrella agreement with ICAO, which will be used to ensure full compliance by the United Nations with host country and ICAO requirements. Moreover, the Department of Field Support had established the Airfield and Air Terminals Unit in the Logistics Support Division in 2009, which has been responsible for monitoring recommendations pertaining to the required training of United Nations personnel in the Mission in this functional area.

36. In an audit of cash management in MONUC (AP2008/620/02), OIOS found that the Mission had not implemented physical controls over Cashiers' offices and vaults. In particular, controls over the opening of vaults and issuance of access cards were weak, exposing the Mission to the risk of financial losses. In the previous audit report on cash management (AP2006/620/05), conducted in 2006, the Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS to install surveillance cameras and bulletproof glass in the windows of the Cashiers' offices. However, the current audit found that this recommendation was still pending, as most Cashiers' offices were still not adequately safeguarded. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS and the Department of Field Support advised that the Mission had now taken measures to improve controls over Cashiers' offices and vaults.

37. In an audit of the management of waste disposal and environmental protection activities in UNMIS (AP2008/632/13), OIOS found that medical waste was not properly disposed of. The failure to properly dispose of medical waste poses environmental risks that, if not addressed, could harm the health of staff. Following the recommendation of OIOS, the Mission acquired the necessary incineration facilities and began training staff and contractors on waste disposal and environmental protection.

38. In an audit of the management of a multifunction logistics services contract (AP2008/634/03) in UNAMID, OIOS found that there was inadequate verification of invoices against the provisions of the contract. This resulted in an overpayment of $4.7 million to the contractor for fuel expenses, which could have been avoided if verification procedures for invoices had been followed. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS and advised that it had now implemented a sound verification process in connection with payments made to the contractor. Invoices that were inadequately supported have been returned.

39. In an audit of safety and security operations in UNAMID (AP2008/634/02), OIOS found that security precautions and preparations were not commensurate with the risks associated with the Mission's operating environment. This was largely attributed to limited implementation of security recommendations. OIOS recommended that urgent measures be taken to enhance staff security. The Department of Safety and Security, the Department of Field Support and the

Mission accepted most of the recommendations of OIOS and have made a number of improvements in this area.

40. In an audit of the document management system in UNMIK (AP2009/650/01), OIOS found that retention periods and procedures for most documents were not uniform across the Mission. OIOS also found that archive focal points in the Mission were not familiar with the detailed retention schedule for peacekeeping operations, available on the website of the Archives and Records Management Section of the Office of Central Support Services. Non-compliance with the relevant archiving standards may result in improper preservation and classification of documents, resulting in a loss of institutional knowledge. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS and advised that archive focal points had been established and instructions on procedures to identify and assign retention periods to records had been issued. Focal points had also been adequately briefed.

41. In an audit of the Environment and Natural Resources Unit in UNMIL (AP2009/626/06), OIOS found that the Mission had no environmental action plan, precluding it from effectively monitoring environmental issues and thus from mitigating their impact. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS to prepare an environmental action plan and to maintain an environmental log in compliance with the Environmental Policy for United Nations Field Missions.

42. In the same audit, OIOS found that because of inappropriate infrastructure in the host country, sewage extracts, wastewater and industrial waste, including toxic substances, were not disposed of in accordance with the Environmental Policy for United Nations Field Missions. The improper disposal of waste can create health hazards and pollution by contaminating the air, soil, surface and groundwater. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS and advised that it had now taken measures to ensure a more environmentally responsible disposal of waste.

43. In an audit of the execution of the delegation of authority to UNOCI to procure core requirements (AP2007/640/15), OIOS found cases where commercial bids were opened together with technical bids, contrary to procurement guidelines. These guidelines specify that the buyers, requisitioners and evaluation committee should not have access to cost details that could influence the technical evaluation process. In three cases, OIOS noted that lowest cost bids were inappropriately evaluated as technically non-compliant resulting in an additional cost of $490,000 to the United Nations. The Mission did not accept the recommendation of OIOS to address accountability of staff responsible for the technical evaluation of these cases, stating that the actions of the staff did not constitute irregularities. OIOS reiterated its recommendation as, in its opinion, those actions violated the United Nations procurement rules and procedures. Further, the Mission did not provide acceptable evidence that requisitioners were not privy to information contained in the financial bids during the technical evaluation process.

44. In an audit of procurement in UNAMI (AP2008/812/06), OIOS raised concerns about the award of a contract worth $3 million, on a sole-source basis, for work to install overhead protection in staff accommodation, even though there were a number of other construction contractors in Baghdad. The Mission considered it inappropriate to conduct a competitive bidding process. The Mission further noted that the process, due to its exigency, had been approved by the Department of Safety and Security, the Security Management Team for Iraq and the Department of Management. Given that the award of contracts on a sole-source basis increases the

risk of financial loss to the Organization, this method of procurement is governed by specific conditions, as defined in procurement rules and procedures. OIOS questioned the basis of the approval for sole-sourcing, as conditions for this method of procurement were not fully met. The Mission did not accept the recommendation of OIOS to review the circumstances leading to the decision to award the contract on a sole-source basis and address accountability for not following a competitive bidding procedure.

45. In the same audit, OIOS found that while the Mission issued solicitation documents to shortlisted vendors, the criteria used were not documented and therefore not clear. There was thus a high risk of arbitrariness in shortlisting vendors, which could impede the Mission's ability to obtain best value for money in the solicitation process. The Procurement Manual requires that procurement officers certify the list of all registered vendors to whom solicitation documents are distributed. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS calling for the establishment of clear criteria for shortlisting vendors.

46. In an audit of security operations in UNAMI (AP2009/812/03), OIOS found that contrary to provisions of the Field Security Handbook, the security plan for Iraq had not been reviewed and updated regularly. Delays in updating the security plan for Iraq were mainly attributed to high turnover of senior security staff and competing operational priorities. Plans should be updated in a timely manner to ensure that they reflect the security needs of United Nations staff and property. During the audit, the Mission took action to update the country-specific security plan in compliance with the Field Security Handbook.

47. In MONUC, OIOS conducted preliminary fact-finding inquiries into claims of sexual exploitation and abuse of minors in internally displaced persons camps by military members of a troop-contributing country. Preliminarily, OIOS found prima facie evidence that some peacekeepers of the troop-contributing country concerned had, between December 2007 and April 2009, sexually exploited and abused minors from several internally displaced persons camps. In response to the OIOS investigation report, the Permanent Mission of the troop-contributing country advised the United Nations that, although its investigation did not substantiate the reported misconduct, additional preventive activities concerning sexual exploitation and abuse had been implemented (ID Case No. 0171/09).

48. Also in MONUC, three members of a military contingent were reported to have sexually abused a minor. Two separate ad hoc teams from MONUC were deployed to the locale of the incident, without formal notification to or participation by OIOS investigators. Both of the MONUC teams concluded that the claims against the peacekeepers were unsubstantiated, the first team without interviewing the victim. OIOS assessed that under the circumstances, there would be little value in conducting further investigations. OIOS advised the Department of Field Support that there should be enhanced collaborative efforts between MONUC and OIOS on the implementation of investigative operating protocols and best practices in addressing serious misconduct pursuant to the provisions of the model memorandum of understanding (A/61/19/Rev.1, annex) and General Assembly resolution 59/287 (ID Case No. 0401/09).

49. OIOS investigated claims that a staff member in MONUC had misused his office to obtain travel documents and airline tickets for another staff member's spouse and that he had also facilitated the issuance of fraudulent visas to United

Nations staff members and non-United Nations persons. OIOS found that the subject of the investigation had misled staff members, who had legitimate travel requests, in order to facilitate his obtaining monies fraudulently. The staff member admitted paying bribes to local officials in order to facilitate the processing of travel documents. The findings of the investigation were referred to the Department of Field Support, where the matter is pending the outcome of the internal disciplinary process (ID Case No. 0469/07).

50. OIOS investigated a report of entitlement fraud by a United Nations volunteer at UNMIK. OIOS found that the United Nations volunteer had obtained a false marriage certificate to facilitate the issuance of a visa to his purported spouse and had received $9,000 in dependency benefits in respect of two children for whom the staff member did not have legally established parental and financial responsibility. Following the recommendations of OIOS for appropriate action against the United Nations volunteer and recovery of monies, the matter is pending the outcome of the United Nations Volunteers headquarters Disciplinary Panel (ID Case No. 0084/08).

51. OIOS investigated irregularities in two procurement exercises at UNMIK. While OIOS did not find evidence of fraudulent or corrupt practices, procurement deficiencies, due to lack of familiarity of staff members with procurement rules, were identified. The Department of Field Support accepted the recommendation of OIOS to provide additional training to all UNMIK procurement staff engaged in the procurement process, which is planned for March and April 2010 (ID Case Nos. 0227/08, 0089/09, 0090/09, 0091/09, 0092/09, 0093/09 and 0141/09).

52. In UNMIL, OIOS investigated claims that two United Nations civilian police officers (including a team leader) had sexually exploited local women. OIOS found that the police officers had sexually exploited numerous women and, in furtherance of doing so, had engaged third parties to solicit women for them. The Department of Field Support has referred the findings of the OIOS investigation to the police-contributing countries concerned for appropriate action; a response has yet to be received (ID Case No. 0233/07).

53. Also in UNMIL, OIOS investigated a report that a member of a military contingent was arrested by local authorities in possession of illicit narcotics. A subsequent contingent board of inquiry exonerated the subject. However, preliminarily, OIOS found that the board of inquiry had failed to conduct a thorough examination of the facts and its findings were not based on a fair and impartial hearing. The Department of Field Support has provided the OIOS findings to the concerned troop-contributing country; a response has yet to be received (ID Case No. 0032/07).

54. In UNMIS, OIOS initially responded and preserved evidence related to the reported killing of a non-governmental organization worker by a member of a military contingent. Pursuant to the model memorandum of understanding, the Department of Field Support reported the case to the concerned troop-contributing country, which subsequently appointed national investigation officers to undertake, supported by OIOS, an investigation into the matter. The OIOS report is pending finalization as the United Nations awaits the findings of the investigation carried out by the national investigation officers (ID Case No. 0391/09).

55. OIOS investigated claims in UNMIS that some staff members had fraudulently utilized the unique personal identification number (PIN) codes assigned to other mission personnel in order to make free personal telephone calls. The OIOS

investigation substantiated findings of fraud against 12 staff members, including 2 former staff, and 5 contractors. OIOS also recommended a review of available technologies and policies to prevent further abuses using PIN codes. The cases are pending the outcome of the internal disciplinary process (ID Case No. 0746/06).

56. In UNOCI, OIOS investigated a report of fraudulent claims for reimbursement of travel expenses by various United Nations officials. It was further reported that the budget allotted to official travel had been overspent for the previous five years, thereby increasing exposure to risks of fraud. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions expressed concern about the high level of travel expenditure. OIOS found deficiencies in the reimbursement process for the travel allotment resulting in overexpenditures for years 2004 to 2007. For example, the initial budget allocation for fiscal year 2006/07 was set at $256,000; however, the total expenditure amounted to $2,033,000. OIOS found that there was no guidance material in place for checking, reporting or responding to irregular claims. The Department of Field Support was advised of the system deficiencies for its remedial action. UNOCI has implemented appropriate measures to address the concerns raised by both the Advisory Committee and OIOS (ID Case No. 0258/07).

57. Also in UNOCI, a report was received that 10 members of a military contingent had sexually abused a minor female. Pursuant to the model memorandum of understanding, a national investigation officer was appointed and a joint investigation with OIOS was conducted. OIOS found that too much time had elapsed between occurrence and reporting of the incident and that the concerned contingent commander had failed to appropriately address the matter and comply with reporting obligations. Further, OIOS found that some military contingent members had behaved inappropriately in their interaction with the reported victim. Due to evidentiary constraints, however, OIOS could not make any conclusive findings regarding the reported sexual abuse. The preliminary findings of the OIOS investigation have been forwarded by the Department of Field Support to the concerned troop-contributing country; a response has not yet been received (ID Case No. 0207/08).

58. In an investigation at UNOCI, OIOS substantiated a report that a staff member had assaulted another staff member and also threatened him with loss of employment if he reported the incident. The matter is pending the outcome of the internal disciplinary process (ID Case No. 0230/08).

59. In an investigation at UNOCI, OIOS established that a United Nations official had engaged in sexual exploitation and abuse of a minor. The evidence showed that the official cohabitated and maintained a sexual relationship with the minor, and that he gave her gifts and financial assistance. The case has been referred to the Department of Field Support for transmittal to the appropriate authorities for possible disciplinary action (ID Case No. 0235/09).

D. Financial risk

60. OIOS defines financial risk in the context of the United Nations as the impact on the mandate, operations or reputation of the Organization arising from:

(a) Failure to obtain sufficient funding;

(b) Inappropriate use of funds;

(c) Inadequate management of financial performance below expectations;

(d) Inappropriate reporting and disclosure of financial performance.

61. In an audit of rental of premises in MONUC (AP2008/620/11), OIOS found that only 31 per cent of the premises occupied by MONUC were provided free of rent. Contrary to the Status of Forces Agreement between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Mission, the Government did not provide rent-free premises for operational and administrative purposes. As a result, private premises were rented at exorbitant prices, amounting to approximately $7 million per annum. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS and advised that it continued to pursue the matter with the host Government to ensure compliance with the Status of Forces Agreement.

62. In an audit of local procurement in UNMIS (AP2008/632/07), OIOS found that goods had not been delivered in a timely manner for more than 85 (or 13 per cent) of the 630 purchase orders issued by the Mission during 2007/08. The Mission did not penalize the vendors for late delivery as the majority of the contracts for local procurement did not contain the relevant protection against delayed deliveries. Had the purchase orders contained the relevant protection, the Mission could have recovered approximately $2 million in liquidated damages. During 2007/08, penalties totalling $545,370 were imposed for two extreme cases. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS to include provisions in all future contracts that protect the United Nations against unnecessary delays.

63. In an audit of the administration of staff entitlements to meet the minimum operating residential security standards in UNMIL (AP2008/626/02), OIOS found that the financial cap for fuel/electricity reimbursement under the security standards had not been adjusted to reflect changes in the price of fuel. Fuel/electricity reimbursements under the security standards are intended to defray the actual costs incurred by staff members, and are determined based on the security situation and cost of the goods and services in the Mission's area of operations. Based on the OIOS recommendation, UNMIL decreased the financial cap for security lighting reimbursements from $700 to $430, which resulted in estimated savings of around $1.1 million.

64. In an audit of the management of the public information programme in UNOCI (AP2008/640/06), OIOS found that poor planning for the acquisition of radio equipment had resulted in equipment valued at $1.2 million being idle for over a year. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS and advised that it had put in place measures to ensure that future acquisitions were adequately justified and that acquired equipment was used.

E. Operational risk

65. OIOS defines operational risk in the context of the United Nations as the impact on the mandate, operations or reputation of the Organization arising from:

(a) Inadequate, inefficient or failed internal processes;

(b) Failure to carry out operations economically, efficiently or effectively.

66. In an audit of air operations in UNIFIL (AP2008/672/01), OIOS found significant differences between planned and actual flight hours, primarily due to

inadequate planning. In particular, OIOS noted that while actual hours were significantly higher than budgeted hours for passenger and VIP flights, actual hours were lower than budgeted hours for core operations, which might indicate that operations had not been implemented as intended. The Mission stated that it had no reasonable basis for estimating the time required for patrolling when the budget was being prepared 12 months in advance. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS to perform appropriate analyses to ensure that the implementation of mandated activities was accepted. The Department of Field Support clarified that the difference between planned and actual flights was not due to inadequate planning, but to the unique prevailing and changing circumstances during the period covered by the OIOS audit. At the time, due to the deteriorated security situation in Lebanon, regular shuttle flights had to be introduced, which resulted in a significant increase in hours for passenger transportation. The VIP flights were not for VIPs only, but mainly for official delegations, which included the military visits of future commanders and their staff for orientation before rotation. Some other VIP flights were for United Nations Headquarters personnel who had visited the Mission for management reviews.

67. In an audit of conduct and discipline in MONUC (AP2008/620/01), OIOS found that the investigative capacity of the Mission was insufficient to address the backlog of cases, which had a negative impact on the resolution of misconduct cases. For example, a review of 31 misconduct cases showed that 21 cases (68 per cent of the caseload) remained under investigation for a considerable period of time, sometimes exceeding 24 months. MONUC explained that it did not have staff with the requisite skills. In this regard, Investigations Division has developed a comprehensive training programme to build up the capacity of United Nations staff with responsibility for investigating or otherwise dealing with possible misconduct. MONUC participated in this training programme in December 2009.

68. The OIOS audit of the management of expendable inventories in MONUC (AP2008/620/13) found a number of discrepancies between the Galileo inventory management system records and the results of physical counts conducted by OIOS for three self-accounting units. These discrepancies were mainly attributed to poor controls over inventory records. In addition, OIOS found inadequate controls over access to warehouses, which is required to properly safeguard assets and mitigate the risk of loss of assets through theft. The Mission accepted the recommendations of OIOS to ensure that all adjustments to inventory records were properly investigated and authorized in compliance with existing procedures. In addition, the Department of Field Support advised that it had conducted a training workshop for all self-accounting units on warehousing and inventory management in MONUC and that the Mission had implemented a new inventory system as of 30 January 2010.

69. In an audit of travel arrangements in UNMIT (AP2009/682/06), OIOS found that the Mission was not using the existing systems contract for shipping services established by the Department of Management. The use of this contract would have saved more than $250,000 a year. As recommended by OIOS, the Mission immediately commenced using the existing systems contract.

70. In an audit of UNMIT's support to security sector review and reform in Timor-Leste (AP2009/682/02), OIOS found that UNMIT security sector advisers were underutilized. For example, only two of the eight advisers recruited by the

Mission shared offices with their respective Government counterparts, and some components of the security sector did not formally consult the Mission on a number of reform initiatives. Delays in establishing the Mission's security sector support capacity precluded the Mission from properly articulating its support strategy and establishing an effective working relationship with the Government from the outset. The Mission accepted the recommendations of OIOS calling for the Mission to reassess its roles and strategy relating to security sector reform and to realign its staffing levels as appropriate.

71. In an audit of patrolling activities by military observers in UNMIS (AP2009/632/04), OIOS found that there was a very low achievement of targets for conducting mobile patrols. For example, only 22,124 (or 9 per cent) of the planned 237,168 mobile patrol days were achieved in 2007/08. The reasons for the underperformance included insufficient sector-level awareness training, inadequate logistical support and a lack of adequate safety equipment to patrol in a hostile environment. UNMIS accepted the recommendations of OIOS to provide the necessary training and support to ensure military observers were equipped to function effectively.

72. In an audit of the provision of medical services in UNAMID (AP2009/634/15), OIOS found deficiencies in self-sustainment of the medical facilities of troop- and police-contributing countries. These deficiencies, noted in the area of staffing and in the deployment of major medical equipment and supplies, affected the adequacy of the available medical services. Under self-sustainment arrangements, the contributing countries have agreed to provide certain facilities on a reimbursement basis. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS that UNAMID take over the purchase of medical supplies until adequate medical facilities are maintained on a self-sustainment basis.

73. In the same audit, OIOS found that several medical facilities were not adequately equipped and that supplies, including blood products, were not available. These deficiencies were due to initial delays in the transportation and distribution of medical consumables and supplies, inadequate maintenance of medical equipment and a lack of adequate storage facilities for drugs and pharmaceuticals. The lack of adequate facilities and supplies may result in ineffective medical services. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS and advised that since the audit, UNAMID had conducted a thorough assessment of the functional status of the troop-contributing countries and United Nations-owned medical facilities deployed in the Mission. For United Nations-owned facilities, appropriate measures had been taken to address the issues identified in the audit. One troop-contributing country hospital that was considered non-operational is being replaced, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support are providing follow-up to ensure that the remaining troop-contributing country medical facilities are upgraded.

74. In an audit of electoral support in UNAMA (AP2009/630/03), OIOS found that, primarily due to poor planning and ineffective recruitment activities, the Mission was not adequately prepared to effectively support the host country's electoral process. For example, the Mission did not have a workplan and its activities were not properly documented. OIOS also noted that because of a five-month delay in recruitment, at the time of the audit only two of the six authorized Professional-level posts had been filled. Moreover, OIOS found that the posts had

been filled by individuals who lacked the relevant experience in electoral support. The Mission accepted the recommendations of OIOS to address each of these issues.

75. In an audit of the HIV/AIDS programme in UNMIL (AP2009/626/05), OIOS found that the Mission did not provide the relevant mandatory awareness and prevention training to a large portion of staff, including 75 per cent of the troops, the largest group of personnel in the Mission. This is contrary to policy directives issued by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations requesting missions to comply with Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) on the provision of awareness and prevention programmes for all peacekeeping personnel. Failure to provide training to staff increases the risk of lack of awareness of HIV/AIDS, impeding the ability of missions to control high-risk behaviour. The Mission accepted the recommendation of OIOS and advised that it now provided the relevant training to all personnel as part of their induction training.

F. Human resources risk

76. OIOS defines human resources risk in the context of the United Nations as the impact on the mandate, operations or reputation of the Organization arising from the failure to develop and implement appropriate human resources policies, procedures and practices.

77. In an audit of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) (AP2009/646/01), OIOS found an ineffective control environment. For example, OIOS identified incidents of interpersonal conflict, poor management, a lax working environment and limited staff knowledge of core competencies, ethics, code of conduct and procedures for disciplinary matters and grievances. The Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Field Support accepted the recommendation of OIOS calling for improved management and administrative controls in the Mission, including: (a) taking immediate action to address issues of misconduct, insubordination and other acts by personnel that create a hostile or volatile work environment; (b) providing UNOGBIS staff with training on United Nations core competencies, ethics, effective communication, team work and diversity, as well as training on human resources policies and procedures, administration of justice and grievances; and (c) assigning a focal point to monitor, track and advise on the problems related to human resources management at UNOGBIS. OIOS was informed that the issues of misconduct and other personnel matters had been addressed and resolved and that the working environment had changed significantly for the better. Furthermore, plans were under way to provide training aimed at staff development and providing background and foundation on the United Nations core competencies, core values and managerial competencies to help improve the management of human resources in the Mission.

G. Information resources risk

78. OIOS defines information risk in the context of the United Nations as the impact on the mandate, operations or reputation of the Organization arising from the failure to establish and maintain appropriate information and communications technology systems and infrastructure. .

79. In an audit of information and communications technology governance, strategic management and security in UNMIS (AT2008/632/01), OIOS found inadequate network security controls. In particular, OIOS found that UNMIS transmitted sensitive data in an unprotected manner, contrary to the provisions of ST/SGB/2007/6, and the presence of insecure remote desktop connections to critical servers. These deficiencies expose UNMIS to risk of breaches of confidentiality and integrity of data. UNMIS did not accept the recommendation of OIOS to replace all insecure network services with remote connectivity security solutions, stating that it was not practical to encrypt all network services. The Mission advised, however, that it would identify sensitive information and communications technology data assets, perform risk assessments and review existing security controls to ensure that they were commensurate with designated sensitivity levels of data being processed, stored or transferred. OIOS is of the view that the anticipated measures by the Mission will help to mitigate the risk identified by the audit.

80. In a horizontal audit of data privacy in the United Nations Secretariat (AT2008/510/01), OIOS identified unmitigated risks in the governance of data protection. Information security, particularly the assurance of data confidentiality, is necessary to ensure privacy of personal data. While the Department of Field Support has drafted a number of policies and directives in accordance with the international standard for information security management (ISO 27001), which addressed, inter alia, security controls related to data privacy, these policies were not formally promulgated and therefore are not fully implemented by programme managers. The lack of full implementation of these guidelines exposes potentially sensitive data to the risks of loss or compromise of data integrity. The Department of Field Support accepted the recommendation of OIOS to formalize, implement and monitor compliance with security policies in coordination with the Office of Information and Communications Technology.